

V. *Note on the Papilio polydecta of Cramer.* By
LIONEL DE NICÉVILLE.

[Read December 5th, 1883.]

PLATE III.

THE correct identification of species described by old authors is a matter of much importance to all workers in Natural History, and as that of the above butterfly is shrouded in considerable doubt I write the following in the hope that the specimens described may be accepted by lepidopterists as finally settling what this insect really is.

I have lately received a pair of a *Mycalesis* from Mr. F. Mackwood, taken in Ceylon, one of which bears a ticket with the following in Mr. Moore's handwriting—" ? *polydecta*. Not in Lep. Ceyl." These specimens do not agree with Cramer's figure (Pap. Ex., vol. ii., pl. cxliv., figs. E, F, 1777) of *P. polydecta* in the following points :—On the upper side of the hind wing there is only one ocellus in the second median interspace, the second ocellus in the first median interspace in *M. polydecta* being absent, and the fulvous marginal lines are obsolete. On the under side of the fore wing *M. polydecta* has two fulvous marginal bands inwardly defined with black lines, which are absent from my specimens; the four discal ocelli are more prominent and perfect, and placed one in each interspace from the first median to the lower discoidal interspace, while the Ceylon male has no ocellus in the third median interspace, but there is one in the first discoidal interspace, the total number (four) thus remaining the same. The female, however, has five ocelli, the missing one in the male being minutely present. The number of ocelli in the hind wing in the Ceylonese specimens is the same as in *M. polydecta*, but they are all much smaller, and arranged in a more sinuous line. In *M. polydecta*, however, beyond the ocelli is a prominent bluish-white band, a dark, very zigzag, fuscous line, then a pale yellow band,

and lastly a fulvous line defined on both sides with black. In the Ceylon specimens the area beyond the ocelli is pale violet, having an obscure sinuous dark line, and two finer lines on the margin, with the area between them fulvous.

The variation in the number and size of the ocelli I consider unimportant, as the only two specimens of this species I have seen differ the one from the other in this respect; and, as regards the other markings, I think it may be conceded that Cramer's figure is much too highly coloured, differing in this respect from any species of the genus *Mycalesis* known to me. This being granted, our Ceylon specimens may be referred to *P. polydecta*, Cramer, as surmised by Mr. Moore. It comes in Mr. Moore's group *Samanta* of *Mycalesis*, and is nearest to *M. Langi*, de N. (Butt. of India, vol. i., p. 130, n. 112, 1883), from which it differs, on the upper side of the fore wing, in having no subapical ocelli, and the lower ocellus being smaller. The tone of coloration of the under side also differs considerably. I append a full description of the species:—

♂. Upper side: Both wings dark brown. Fore wing with a large ocellus placed in the first median interspace, and extending some distance beyond it above and below; black, with a prominent white pupil and ochreous iris, this ocellus being placed on a discal band, inwardly sharply defined, outwardly diffused, paler than the ground colour. Hind wing with a small ocellus in the second median interspace; a submarginal waved indistinct fuscous line and two marginal lines continued obscurely on the fore wing. Under side: Both wings paler brown, glossed with ochreous; with a subbasal irregular fuscous line and a discal ochreous nearly straight line inwardly sharply defined, outwardly diffused, with the ground colour beyond it paler and passing into pale violet; a submarginal sinuous obscure dark line and two finer marginal black lines. Fore wing with four very small ocelli, hind wing with seven. Cilia pale brown throughout. Female a little larger, the wings broader and more rounded, and lacking the usual male secondary sexual characters. The under side of the forewing has five ocelli; otherwise as in the male. Expanse, ♂, 1.95 in.; ♀, 2.05 in.

Hab. Tranquebar (Cramer), Ceylon.

The *Mycalesis polydecta* of Butler (Ann. & Mag. of Nat. Hist., third series, vol. xx., p. 402, pl. ix., figs. 5, 6,

female, 1867) must now be considered to be but a local variety (if even that) of *M. mineus*, Linnæus, as pointed out by Mr. Distant in his 'Rhopalocera Malayana,' p. 51; as also the specimens identified by Mr. Moore as varieties of *polydecta*, and described in the 'Butterflies of India,' p. 119, n. 98; but Major Marshall and I therein correctly expressed our opinion that they "appear to us to be varieties of *mineus* rather than of *polydecta*."

NOTE BY W. L. DISTANT.

Our colleague, Mr. de Nicéville, having presented this note to the Society through my hands, I take the opportunity to make a few remarks on a species of Indian *Satyridæ* belonging to the genus *Ypthima*; the accompanying plate affording an opportunity to give additional figures.

In 1882 (Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5, vol. x., p. 406) I described an Indian Satyrid (captured by our member, Mr. F. E. Robinson) under the name of *Ypthima Robinsoni*. In their 'Butt. Ind. Burm. and Ceyl.,' p. 230, Messrs. Marshall and de Nicéville truly remarked that the species was probably synonymic with *Y. Ypthimoides*, Moore. I can only plead, in justification of renaming the species of my friend Mr. Moore, that before doing so, and after having worked out the other species of the genus, I submitted the typical specimens to his examination, and he failed to recognise that it was the species he had described in error under the genus *Callerebia*. I now figure it to prevent further confusion, and the synonymy will therefore stand thus:—

Ypthima Ypthimoides. (Pl. III., fig. 4).

Callerebia Ypthimoides, Moore, Trans. Ent. Soc. Lond., 1881, p. 307.

Ypthima Ypthimoides, Marsh. & de Nic., Butt. Ind. Burm. & Ceyl., p. 230, n. 221 (1883).

Ypthima Robinsoni, Dist., Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5, vol. x., p. 406 (1882); Marsh. & de Nic., Butt. Ind. Burm. & Ceyl., p. 229, n. 220 (1883).

At the time of redescribing the above I described a species of the Oriental and Ethiopian genus *Melanitis*

from Masassi, East Africa, which I have now an opportunity to figure.

Melanitis Libya. (Pl. III., fig. 5).

Melanitis Libya, Dist., Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist., ser. 5,
vol. x., p. 405 (1882).

EXPLANATION OF PLATE III.

- FIG. 1. *Papilio polydecta*, after Cramer.
2. *Mycalesis (Samanta) polydecta*, Cram., male; from Ceylon.
3. *Mycalesis (Samanta) Langi*, de Nic., male; from Sikkim.
4. *Ypthima Ypthimoides*, Moore.
5. *Melanitis Libya*, Distant.